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6 February 1965

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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UK-Rhodesia: [The Wilson government has made a concession in order to open the way for progress on Rhodesia's independence.]

[Talks between Wilson and Prime Minister Smith in London on 30 January resulted in agreement that Commonwealth Relations Secretary Bottomley would be permitted to go to Rhodesia on a fact-finding mission. Wilson agreed to Smith's condition that Bottomley would not be able to see those African nationalist leaders who are in prison on criminal charges. This condition had been unacceptable to the British when the Bottomley trip was first proposed last October.]

[Otherwise, the talks were essentially negative. Smith continued to resist suggestions that Africans be given greater political representation in Rhodesia and remained insistent on Rhodesia's desire for independence under the present constitution, which ensures control by the white minority.]

[With this concession on the Bottomley trip and the recent agreement to resume stalled talks on financial aid, the Labor government hopes to prevent a unilateral declaration of independence and thereby to avoid having to take sanctions against Rhodesia.]

[Although Prime Minister Smith has agreed to Bottomley's visit, the US Embassy in London feels it highly unlikely that this new effort will meet with any more success than previous ones.]

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Belgium-Congo: [The Spaak-Tshombé talks have made marked progress on financial questions, and discussions of political matters have now begun.]

[The Congolese appear willing to accept the Belgian position on major financial issues between the two countries. Tshombé is apparently ready to assume responsibility for part of the colonial Congo's public debt--much of which is held by private Belgian citizens. A final settlement of Belgian-Congolese financial matters is expected to be signed before Tshombé leaves Brussels on 7 February.]

[On the political side, Belgium is urging Tshombé to try to improve the image of his government in African eyes by inviting observers, including representatives of the Organization of African Unity, to the Congo for early elections.]

[There will probably also be discussions of Belgium's military aid to the Congo before Tshombé's departure.]

NOTES

France: Paris is tightening its procedures for dealing with foreign investment in France. Since 1 January all investment applications have been referred to the finance minister personally. According to a ministry official, the government plans to discourage take-overs of French companies and "overinvestment" in specific industries, while favoring investment contributing new technology, additional export capacity or new employment. The government will issue no formal instructions in order to avoid vulnerability to charges of violating treaties guaranteeing the free flow of capital.

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*Laos-Thailand: Generals Phoumi and Siho have crossed into Thailand and are reported to be in the government guest house in Udorn, approximately 35 miles from the Thai-Laotian border. The Lao government has information that Phoumi has requested Thai officials to order all rebel forces that have crossed into Thailand to join with him for the purpose of linking up with the armies in the south and marching on Vientiane. The Lao government has made a strong demarche to Bangkok insisting that Phoumi and Siho be placed under house arrest in a location "far from the frontier."

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